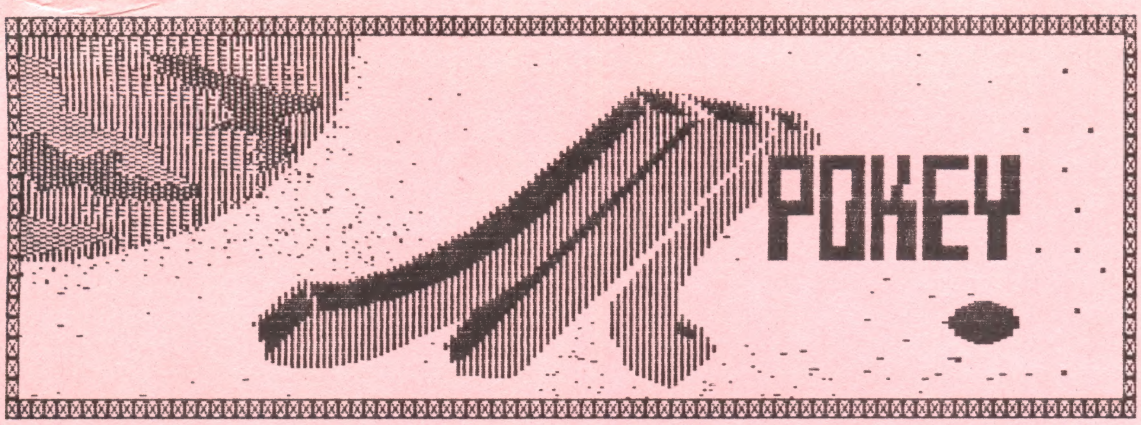


PUBLISHED MONTHLY BUFFALO N.Y.

AUGUST 1987

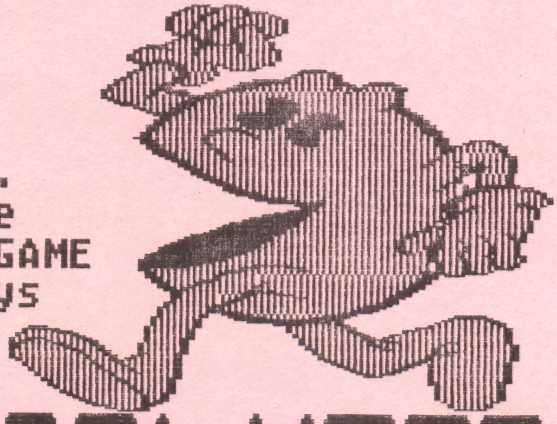
REVIEWS
COLUMNS
EDITORIALS
NEWS

FROM THE W.N.Y.A.U.G. AND AROUND THE ATARI WORLD.

GAMETIME.....
New bank select,massive memory arcade quality GAME CARTS comming soon, says ATARI....munch,munch

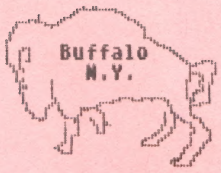
POKEY SALUTES GAMES

THIS MONTHS COVER SALUTES ALL THOSE ATARI GAMES WE LOVE and HATE.



W N Y ATARI USER GROUP

POKEY



The monthly newsletter of the W.N.Y.A.U.G.

The Western New York Atari Users Group
P.O. BOX 59,
Buffalo, N.Y. 14216

Opinions expressed within this newsletter are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the WNYAUG. All articles and programs herein are Public Domain and may be reprinted freely, provided due credit is given to the WNYAUG. Deadlines for all articles and advertising is by the 15th of the month prior to the newsletter issue date. Advertising rates per 3 month period are as follows Full page-$50 Half page-$35 Quarter page-$20 Business card-$10.

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THE MEETINGS.....

WNYAUG's meetings are at 7:30 pm the first thursday of every month in the south room of the communication center on the State University College Campus, 1300 Elmwood Ave.

All are welcome to attend.

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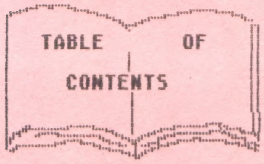

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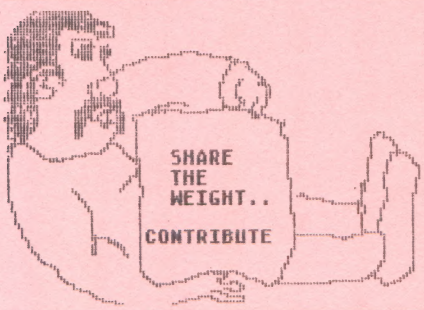

All those who would like to contribute any articles, reviews, artwork, or whatever must have their submissions in by the 15th of the month prior to the newsletters next issue date. Articles can be uploaded to BATES MOTEL or mailed to the editor c/o POKEY Newsletter, P.O. BOX 59, Buffalo, N.Y. 14216.

WNYAUG

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION:

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WNYAUG's general meetings start at 7:30 P.M. on the first Thursday of each month in the Communication Center South room, on the State University College Campus, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, New York.

Deadlines for all articles and advertising is on the 15th of the month prior to the newsletter issue date. All those who would like to contribute any articles, reviews, artwork, software or hardware modifications may submit them to any club officer or may be uploaded to B.A.T.E.S. (716) 875-7376, or mailed to the Editor c/o POKEY NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 59, Buffalo, N.Y. 14216. Articles are preferred submitted in a format suitable for immediate photocopy (condensed print pitch-62 characters wide). If that is not possible every effort will be made to assist you in getting them published.

The Western New York Atari Users' Group invites you to become a member. Dues are $15.00 per year and entitle the member to the following:

1) Receive the monthly newsletter
2) Purchase programs from the public domain library
3) Join and or form special interest groups
4) Purchase materials at reduced prices
5) Receive a membership card that entitles you to discounts at local participating computer stores.

MEMBERSHIP: If you wish to become a new member send a check or money order, in the amount of fifteen (15) dollars payable to WNYAUG, and mail to: POKEY NEWSLETTER, P.O. Box 59, Buffalo, N.Y. 14216, or better yet stop in at the next meeting and sign up.

RENEWALS: Please take the time to look at the label on your newsletter. Your membership identification number and the expiration date (month and year) are on the last line of your mailing label. The month and year printed is the very last issue that you will receive. Try to renew at least one month early. This will help us keep our records in order and lessen the chance of you missing any issues of the newsletter. Notify us immediately if you think that there is an error. Also notify us of any corrections or change of address. Cost of renewals is $12.00 per year.

ADVERTISING RATES: Full page - $50; Half page - $35; Quarter page - $20; Business card $10 per three month period.

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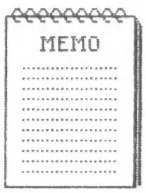


OUTPUT

When they say ' *hot off the press* ', now I know what they really mean. The past few weeks of 90 degree plus, humid weather has taken its toll on this Editor and his equipment. Even with the help of three fans, the little room I edit and print this paper in has been just to hot to work in, so I hope I get this issue to the printers in time for the meeting.

This issue of POKEY has a good selection of articles from our members and from around the Atari world. Thanks to our regulars Dave A, Theron, Debby, Jeff E, Terminator, Ziggy, and John S for the local contributions.

In last months Atari News I neglected to give credit to ZMAG, Delphi, and Computer Shopper as sources.....SORRY guys.

Good reading awaits you as I run to get another cold one and pray this heat lets off. I hope you all enjoy this months POKEY.

Keith Schafer

INPUT.

Letters to POKEY

Well, now that POKEY is back on a regular schedule and being mailed in a timely fashion, the letters from loyal fans are starting to pour in. Below is a sample. However, first we have a letter to the WNYAUG membership from Betty Knab, who is now in charge of making sure your POKEY gets mailed on time each month. Take it away, Betty!

Dear POKEY subscribers,

I would like to apologize for the June POKEY being mailed so late. Dave A! had to rework the membership list as it would not run on my 800. The lists also had to be updated. Quite a few of the clubs we exchange newsletters with have new addresses. This was no easy task as we have about 400 names on our mailing lists.

I have never used SYN-FILE and without any good instructions, I had trouble getting the label program to work. I finally hand addressed them.

The next problem occured when they were ready to mail. We ended up going to the main post office for help with the forms.

Barring any more problems, we hope to get the POKEYs mailed within a week of the meeting.

I would like to thank Dave A! for all the help he has given me and to my husband, Norm without whose help I would have not undertaken this job.

Betty Knab

POKEY
(It's the BEST!)

from James Egri
(Ziggy)

First of all, I would like to say what a GREAT JOB, KEITH is doing.

Now I'm not putting down the POKEY, but as I was reading the POKEY, I felt I was battling the staples for reading. (What can I say? The staples kept bothering me.) So, I was thinking (Uh Oh, better call the doctor - I was THINKING!) that there would be a better way to put the POKEY together. There are several ways to do this.

1) Put on a massive AD campaign and then hire a local publisher to do it in a professional looking format, complete with fancy paper.

2) Figure out a way to put the POKEY out so that it has 1 sheet for every 4 pages, (instead of 2) then fold the pages (like a newspaper).

3) Change the paper so that POKEY is thinner. (Use National Geographic brown wrapping paper for mailing.)

4a) Or most likely, don'T do anything and let me suffer. (I'm probably the only person who has a complaint anyway!)

4b) And take this whole letter as a joke and laugh, and tell KEITH what a fine job he did on his first issue as editor!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

DEAR WNYAUG,

Thank you for the free copy of POKEY, June 1987, which you sent to me in answer to my earlier inquiry, that in tunr resulted from your distribution of the excellent TURBO BASIC program from Europe. I am glad to be able to join WNYAUG, and my check for $15.00 is enclosed.

It is doubtful that I will ever be able to attend your meetings because of the distances involved from my home in Delaware and my employment in Washington, D.C. Nevertheless, I found much more useful information in the June POKEY for Atari 8-bit owners than has been appearing of late in the polished 70-page CURRENT NOTES published in the Washington, D.C. area. I should mention that I also belong to one of the Washington area Atari user groups and regularly attend its meetings as well as the meetings of another group in that area.

You appear to be going through the divisive ST/XE controversies that have been precipitated throughout the Atari world. The user groups I am familiar with now carry out demos on both machines simultaneously but at different ends of the same room. Interestingly, the groups split about even in one user group and about 75% 8-bit in the other. My perception of the effect of Atari Corp.'s actions is that they knowingly or unknowingly frustrate 8-bit owners with either no products or disappointing new products such as AtariWriter Plus and the XEP-80 (third parties are producing the good hardware and software), and thereby lead existing 8-bit owners to move to a new system. Maybe this conversion is essential to Atari's US sales and profitability. Regardless of what may be the true intentions, I do not see Apple treating its 8-bit owners in this fashion. Nor do I see Apple floating the possibility of a PC compatible. What will be the status of ST owners when (if) the Atari PC arrives?

Thank you for allowing me to join WNYAUG and recieve

POKEY.

Sincerely,
Frank M. Ferrell

Dave A! replies: While I might not agree with Mr. Farrell's assesment of AtariWriter Plus as a disappointing product (at least not judging by the number of people who use it), many of his thoughts are so close to my own opinions, that it is spooky. Please check out my article on Why I Did Not Buy An ST.

Rotterdam, July 7th, 1987

Dear Dave and WNYAUG,

First of all, thanks for sending me the POKEY magazines. I cannot tell you how happy I am to recieve a sign from you and the WNYAUG. I hope that the title from your latest number (June '87, A New Beginning) also counts for a new contact between us. It is good to read the POKEY is back again after a very hard time. It still contains very interesting articles.

Reading the older POKEYs, I have read your articles about the Turbo Basic, it must be a big hit in the WNYAUG. In Holland, it never had that much interest by the users as with WNYAUG. You probably know from Paul O. Parks (Librarian for NWPAC) that in his group, it is also a big hit at the moment. The same author of Turbo Basic has now his own software house. From the same author, there are now the following programs for the ST:

GFA BASIC - an excellent interpreter for the ST. A better and faster Basic is not available for the ST.

GFA BASIC COMPILER makes the GFA programs faster than most C programs.

GFA DRAFT a CAD program.

GFA VEKTOR - a very fast 3D program.

These programs are not public domain. The GFA BASIC and the compiler have special prices for users groups. I can recommend these programs. I am working a lot with both of them and with me, most of the ST users. They all prefer it above the C language.

It looks as if it has been years since I have written a letter to you. How are things still working with the 8-bit Ataris? Since September last year, I have a 520ST, SF314, and SC1224 colour monitor. I must say since that day, I have never missed the good old XL/XE. In the beginning, I still had my XE but lately I sold all my 8-bit stuff to a friend of mine.

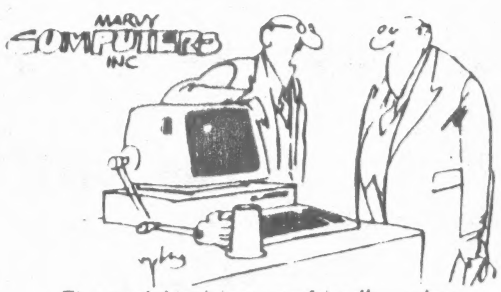
Since the last time, a lot has been changed over here. We now have two seperate users groups for XL/XE and the ST. Both groups have their own magazines. It is going very well with ATARI in Holland. There are more than 15,000 STs sold in about one year and the XL/XE is even more popular than the C64 ever has been. We now have several Dutch magazines for both computers. So you see a lot has changed in a couple of months. At the last big meeting, we had about 10,000 users in one day.

I have heard about the Expo and reading the article, it must have been a great success for all the members of the WNYAUG. How is the situation with ATARI in the USA? From a friend of mine who has been to the USA, I heard that the ST is not such a good selling product as it is in Europe. He told me that ATARI expects more from their new PC in the USA than from the ST. In Holland, I don't expect great sales from the new PC. There are too many cheap IBM clones and furthermore, who wants an MS-DOS computer if he can get an ST for a lower price? The price for a starting ST set ia at the moment about 1200 dutch guilders (520STm, SF354, and mouse) while the new PC is about 2000 dutch guilders.

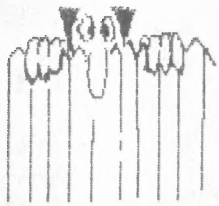
I expect more from the new MegaST and the laser printer. At Europe's greatest show in Hanover, Germany, there was a lot of interest in the MegaST, especially from the business world.

Well, that is it for the moment. I hope that this is the beginning of a new contact between us. If I can help you with something, please let me know. Hope to hear very soon from you and all the best for the WNYAUG and POKEY.

Greetings,
Rene Leusing



This model isn't just user friendly — it has a drinking buddy function."

KEITHS  CORNER

GAMES, GAMES, GAMES.

Ever since that first PONG dot flashed across the screen, I was hooked. Game play on a TV screen, with fast action, my quarter was down. Crude as is was in black and white , the pinball machines looked lonely as a line formed to play the 'video game'. It doesn't seem that long ago that this new invention was sweeping the local bars, eating quarters like they were going out of style. If my memory serves me, the next video game to pop up locally was 'Breakout', but what a game. This one was in color with paddle options, oh the quarters we fed it!

In the mean time, a new company, Atari introduced a game box, complete with two paddles that you could attatch to your TV and play pong, breakout, and some other variations of these games. Off I went, money in hand and countless hours of game play resulted.

The bar games (coin ops) were getting more advanced and the hot game was Space Invaders, and this new Atari Company introduced the 2600, with plug in modules for changing games. I had to have one, money in hand, off I went to spend 139.95 for one of the first local units shipped. Disappointed I wasn't, it came with joy sticks! As the new games came out, putting out 30.00 or 40.00 for a game cart wasn't an unusuall price. It got to a point I would reserve a new cart by placing a deposit of 10.00 to reserve one of the first issues of the game. The house parties in those days would last till sun up with the 2600 in stiff all night compatition. I would watch people get scores unheard of and still try to top them.

Then the market crashed. Atari was in trouble and it seemed all the other companies followed. I became interested in Atari's new home computer and sold off all the 2600 items to help purchase an Atari 800. The ultimate game machine and a computer too is how everyone put it to me. Star Raiders convinced me.

Something else was catching my interest between game play, programming caught my enthusiasm and soon all them games were gathering dust as I attempted to learn Basic and write my own programs.

Soon a disk drive, a modem, and other accessories led me on to other things, all on this 'game machine'.

The point I am trying to make is this: without the 'game' interest, myself and countless other Atari computer users may never have entered the world of home computer enthusiast. It is with this thought in mind that that the cover of this months POKEY is a Salute to Games.

HELP WANTED

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

AT YOUR POKEY NEWSLETTER DESK

ANY ARTICLES GLADLY ACCEPTED.

PLEASE UPLOAD ANY CONTRIBUTIONS TO BATES MOTEL, 716-875-7376 , or SEND TO: WNYAUG, PO BOX 59, BUFFALO, NY 14216.

WHY I DID NOT BUY AN ST

(or 8-bits forever!)

by **Dave Arlington**

A couple of issues ago, we presented an article by Al Adams about how he had sold his entire 8-bit system to purchase an ST and did not regret his decision. I thought this issue I would present a few of the reasons I made the decision I did, to stick with my 8-bit system. The reason I am writing this article is that it seems some Atari 8-bit owners are feeling pressured into believing they should buy another computer system without really having adequate reason to make this decision. I am hoping by outlining some of my reasons, that others will feel a little more secure in their present set-up.

I should point out right from the start, that this is not an anti- ST article. I have worked with the machines, will be programming on them, and have sold them as well. I like them a lot, and they are really excellent machines. I just wouldn't want to own one.

Last summer, I had a little windfall that left me with enough money to upgrade my system, either by expanding my 8-bit system or buying an ST. I chose the 8-bit route. That was last summer. Lately developments with the 8-bit Atari computers have left me MORE enthused about my system rather less. (I guess four or five articles a month indicates some renewed enthusiasm!)

Let's look at some of the common reasons given to ditching your 8-bit system and why I don't think they are valid.

8-BIT COMPUTERS ARE DYING (Dead, Gone, Take your choice). THE NEW 16-BIT TECHNOLOGY IS TAKING OVER. Well, this might come true five years from now or you might believe this if you take as gospel everything that comes out of the Atari Corp. propaganda machine. However, if you step back and look at the big picture, you see an entirely different story. The Atari ST and the Commodore Amiga have been around for two years now, the Apple MAC even longer. I would hardly say any one of those three machines have taken the computer world by storm. Let's face it, right now it is still an 8-bit dominated world out there. (I am, of course, speaking about the home market. It's an MS-DOS world, if you want to speak of the business world.)

Why are 8-bit computers so strong still when their supposed doom is imminent? One only need look at the corporate attitudes of Atari's rivals, Apple and Commodore. Both have made efforts to distinguish their 16-bit machines from their 8-bit machines. No one calls it the Apple MAC (besides me above), there is MAC and there is APPLE, meaning their 8-bit machines. Commodore also did not want the Commodore name associated with the Amiga. Not to mention, no one at Apple or Commodore is talking about the death of 8-bit computers. Those companies know where the butter on their bread is coming from, the continued sales of their 8-bit machines.

It's like the story about how the Air Force spent scads of money to discover, that by all scientific principles, bumblebees should not be able to fly. Their bodies are too heavy, the wing span too small, and the wing muscles too weak. The only problem is that no one ever told the bumblebees they can't fly and so they do.

So too, if the 8-bit machines are dead, someone forgot to tell the happy Apple and C-64 owners that find new and productive uses for their computers every day. Take a look at GEOS for the C-64 sometime and tell me that 8-bit machines cannot handle a desktop type enviroment.

Now one of the reasons I bought an Atari 800, then an 800XL and then a 130(320K)XE was becuase it is technologically superior to the Apple and C-64. If that was true when I bought it, why shouldn't it still be true today? In fact, indeed it is still true.

To borrow some phrases from another user groups newsletter, when I woke up this morning, my computer still ran all my software, processed all the words, etc. Basically, the 8-bit machines are far from dead unlees thats what you choose to believe.

Who DOES want us to believe the 8-bit computers are history? I didn't want to accept this conclusion for a long time, but I have come to believe that Atari themselves would like nothing better than to have the 8-bit machine fade into the sunset. Of course, they say that they still support it fully, because it wouldn't publicly be nice to knock your own company's products or to anger hundreds of thousands of future potential customers.

However, actions do speak louder than words. Look at all the new hardware and software non-releases (unless you want to count press releases!) from Atari for the 8-bit. Notice their growing discomfort at Expos and online discussions with people who keep asking questions about 8-bit support. Ask Atari dealers about the difficulty in getting Atari 8-bit hardware to sell, especially 1050 disk drives. Finally, the biggest blow of all this summer, turning it into a game system! Publicly the stance is, "This new 8-bit game system will revive the line with new software releases." Privately, however, the thinking probably goes like this, "Well, if we turn it into a game machine, it will finally stop being considered seriously as a computer and other people can make cartridges for it." This will make the 8-bits easier for Atari to ignore, if we let them.

THERE ISN'T ANY NEW SOFTWARE COMING OUT FOR THE 8-BIT ATARI. I have three responses to this line of reasoning. First off, while the number of software titles released definately has decreased, the quality has greatly increased. It takes a really good product to make it to market nowadays and you won't find many dogs out there. Not only that, but new quality programs that would have cost a lot of money a couple years back, now are becoming public domain or shareware. Look at Turbo Basic, 1030 Express!, or Daisy-Dot for instance.

Secondly, even if no new software comes out, there is still much more software available for the 8-bit Ataris than

for the ST. The 8-bit Atari has excellent word processors and spreadsheets available. Printing programs, very popular lately, abound for the 8-bit with every concievable font and resolution you can imagine. The 8-bit machines have an abundance of educational software programs available that blows away the ST. (That was very important to me. I have a three year old son and there was simply no comparison between the 8-bit and the ST when it came to educational software.) I don't have to tell anyone who has ever owned an 8-bit Atari about the amount of games that are out there. I have a wish list that includes a really good database, but generally I am more than pleased with the amount and quality of 8-bit software that is available.

To the people still crying the new software blues, I want to ask a couple questions. How much software do you REALLY BUY each year? I know, of course, that no one reading this is a software pirate. I think I spend a lot of money on software and I can only afford about 10-20 new software programs a year. You figure at maybe $25 a crack, 12 new programs would set you back $300 a year. I didn't have any problem finding that many programs to buy last year and don't think I will this year either. Of course, that is just commercial software. Throw in the fine new PD programs like Dasiy-Dot and the number of new software programs goes way up. I have a hunch, and this is just a hunch, mind you, since no one pirates software, that most of the people who say there isn't enough new 8-bit software really mean, "I can't find enough new 8-bit software from my friend, or my friendly pirate BBS."

THE ST IS HAS SO MANY IMPROVED FEATURES OVER THE 8-BITS AT A REASONABLE PRICE. I have seen the future of the 8-bits, my friends, and it's initials are ICD. First I want to talk about the technology of your 8-bit Atari. With a memory upgrade, a 256K MIO, SPARTADOS, and a hard drive, the 8-bit Atari can hold its own with any computer on the market. (Please see my review elsewhere on the MIO.) The only thing missing is an 80 column screen and the MIO has a port for that too. (Don't hold your breath waiting for Atari's XEP-80.)

While the ST has a microprocessor more than 4 times as fast as the 8-bit, code tends to be 4 times as long due to the fact ST programmers are still exploring optimal ways to do things while 8-bit programmers have been crunching code for a long time. While the ST disk drives are much faster than the 8-bit drives, each graphics screen on the ST is 32K big, 4 times larger than the normal 8-bit display.

Throw in the fact that the 8-bit Atari has been dissected completely and somewhere is the answer to almost any question you might have. What other computer allows you replace the operating sytem so easily with your own custom made one or gives you so many alternative Disk Operating Systems? How many offer as many text and graphics modes, along with easy to modify display list instructions. IBMs and APPLES would still kill to have a full screen editor the likes of the 8-bit Atari. It takes an ST or Amiga to match or beat the number of colors an Atari 8-bit can put on the screen at once. Don't forget the custom microprocessors to handle grpahics that speed up the main 6502.

Now that you've remembered all the great things about your computer that no others can boast all in one package, let's look at the so-called reasonable price of an ST. First there's the cost of all the new software. Assuming again, that no pirates are in the vicinty to instantly have a software collection the size of the 8-bit machine, you will have to start right from scratch building a useful library of software. Unless you're independantly wealthy or are one of those no-no guys mentioned above, this will soon equal the cost of your system.

Finally, look at the poor joe who rushed out and bought one of the very first STs produced. Quite a bargain. First, he probably had to go out and buy a color monitor since he found 90% of the software wouldn't run on his monochrome. $$$ Next, he had to go back and get the ROM chips installed since no software would run with TOS in RAM. $$$ Next came the memory upgrade to 1 MEG since all the powerful application programs he bought a 520 for would not run in so little memory. $$$ Next back for a second disk drive since backing up a disk with one drive is like loading a C-64 disk program. $$$ OOOPPS! Better go back with that single-sided drive and get the double sided one since a lot of software won't run on the single sided drives. $$$ There he sits, happy at last, ready to run down to the store again and get the blitter chip since none of the software a year from now will probably work without it. $$$ OUCH! Power Without The Price! I'll tell you what guys, I'm going to continue using my very productive 8-bit computer and you let me know when you get those STs finished, OK??

NEW OFFICERS - WNYAUG

President - *Martin Schlund*

Vice-President - *Steven Daniels*

Treasurer - *Bill Beerbower*

Secretary - *Jim Ide*

Program Librarian - *Wes Ballard*

by **JEFF EBY**

ANTIC SOFTWARE UPDATE

Antic magazine, which has been fighting fiercly to protect it's monthly disk programs from being copied, has decided to change tactics. In the past, the magazine has resorted to strong demands that BBS operators and others refrain from copying and posting Antic's software. This approach got a negative response from nearly the entire Atari community. In a sudden switch, Antic has decided to stop sending out it's monthly programs on disks to it's disk subscribers.

According to a company spokesman, all of Antic's software will now be issued in a new format - a "Computer of the month" with the software based in ROM. This "Computer of the month" is an exact copy of the Atari computer but will only run one program - the Antic program burned into it's ROM. The spokesman claimed that the company was forced to this measure by consumers. "People were loading OUR software into their computer's RAM memory. They say it's the only way to run OUR programs but we know all about ramdisks and won't allow them to copy OUR software."

ATARI CORP., furious at the illegal copies of it's hardware, complained to Antic about violations of Atari's patents. "Well, " sniffed the Antic spokesman, "sometimes a lessor evil is needed to stamp out the greater evil which is the copying of Antic software." Pricing has not been set, but is expected to be high. "that's just the price you have to pay to get OUR software," said the Antic spokesman.

NEW EMULATOR FOR ST

Many Atari users have been wondering why Atari fought so long to prevent an emulator of 8 bit Atari's from being released for the ST. Now the reason has become clear. Atari, in a bold move catching IBM completly by surprise, announced they will be selling an Atari 2600 video game system emulator for the ST line of computers. "We feel this will postion the ST as the best supported system on the market," explained an Atari spokesman. For even more added value a free Pac-Man game will be included in the package. Apparently anticipating a great demand for the emulator, the company reportedly has "a warehouse full" of Pac-Man games ready for shipment. Atari feels this will really push the blitter equipped ST's out the door since the graphics with the blitter chip leaves the older ST's "in the dust." A developer's system will also be available for software houses which will include a dedicated console for video game system development. Atari, never one to rest on it's laurels, is reportedly developing a tape cartridge storage system that will use widely available tape cartridges. Code named the 410/ST it will be available in the 1st quarter of 1988.

SUPPLIED BY THE CHAOS BBS
(517) 371-1106

I found that I was not alone when I started having trouble getting my console keys to work on the ATARI 130XE the CHAOS club used for its BBS. It seems that very many of the machines develop this problem. I asked around and found several others that had do ne as I did, opened the keyboard and cleaned the button contacts, only to get good results for a week or so before losing them again. I then received a couple reprints of articles suggesting hardware fixes. I tried a couple that did not work, but one that worked the best came from Alan Haskell (printed in the SBACE GAZETTE, Aril/May '86). Here's how, with a small modification to save you the trouble I made for myself trying his recommended installation. You will need a small phillips head screwdriver, needle nose pliers, a small soldering iron, and three 3K (3,000 ohm) resistors. Quarter-watt rating is plenty, in fact, the smaller the resistors are physically, the better.

1. Turn over the XE computer and remove the 4 screws that hold it together. Turn the computer over again and remove the top half of the case.
2. Lift out the keyboard and gently pull the ribbon out of its connector. DO NOT OPEN THE KEYBOARD as cleaning internally will not help, and you may damage the carbon track on the baking sheet inside.
3. Remove the motherboard from the lower half of the case by removing the phillips screw holding it down.
4. Remove the top and bottom metal shields from the board by carefully straightening the bent tabs that go through the board.
5. Observe the top and underside of the connector you pulled the keyboard ribbon out of. As seen from the top as you would look at the computer normally, there are 24 connections, with connection #1 at the left and #24 at the right. Connection #3(from the left) is the ground connection. The last 4, #21, #22, #23, #24 are the START, SELECT, OPTION, and RESET connections. When a connection is made from these points to

the ground, the computer will know one or several of the keys are being pushed. Due to a design problem, the console keys have a bit too much resistance to always register even when you really lean on them. So, we will install the three resistors between the connections and ground so as to 'leak' a bit more ground signal to the computer. That way, not nearly so good a connection is required by the actual keys when pressed.

6. Identify the proper pins on the bottom side of the circuit board. We will install the resistors under the board.

7. Solder one end of all three resistors together. Then connect this common end to the ground connection (pin 3). Then solder the free end of the resistors, one each, to pins 21, 22, and 23. (The RESET system never seems affected, nor any other keys.)

8. Be certain that the wires on the resistors do not touch each other nor any other circuitry! Use as little solder and as short a heating time as possible. Tape the resistors to prevent shorting if needed, and press them close to the circuitboard.

9. Reassemble the shields to the board, bending back the tabs to hold it all together. Look inside to be sure the resistors do not touch the lower shield.

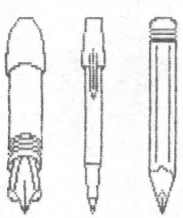
10. Complete the re-assembly, taking extra care not to stress or insert the keyboard ribbon too many times. The spring contacts bend easily, and the conductive coating on the ribbon, if scratched through, will cause the keyboard to be useless. Don't worry too much, that's hard to do if you are careful. (The original mod suggested pressing the resistor leads into the connector so as to make it solder-free and simpler... but that 'simplicity' ruined my connector and made hours more work! Do it right...solder it!) 11. Test the repair. Power up the machine and type in this one line basic program:

```
10 PRINT PEEK(53279):GOTO 10
```

Then type RUN. You will see a row of 7's down your screen. Push OPTION. They should turn to 3's. SELECT will give you 5's, and START will give you 6's. Combinations will give you other numbers from 0 to 7. If each key responds, you have finished the repair.

This has permanently fixed the problem on dozens of XE's. It has restored my keys to 'feather touch' after a long siege of having to boot 5 or 6 times mashing the OPTION key trying to get a boot without BASIC. It WILL work for you.

John Nagy, SYSOP of the CHAOS BBS
(517) 371-1106



ONLINE

3 ARTICLES
FROM OUR MEMBERS

Amodem 7.50

by *Theron E. Ross*

Amodem 7.50 is the newest public domain oterminal pro in the Amodem series by Trent Dudley. Actually an update of the Amodem 7.4x series, Amodem 7.50 adds a few newer features to keep up with the times and fixes a few bugs found in the older programs.

Amodem 7.50 needs a handler for whatever type of modem is being used. On the normal disk Amodem is found on, all the modem handlers are included, plus the "AMODEM75.COM" file, help file, and two documentation files. Since Amodem offers built in Sparta Dos support w/R-Time 8 cartridge, I find it best to use at least Sparta Dos; which works nicely. A bunch of files have to be loaded, and using a "STARTUP.BAT" is the big answer. The one I use goes like so:

```
BOOT850
AMODEM75
BASIC ON
CAR
RUN "D:AMODEM75.BAS"
```

The most extra that is done is typing in the time and date which is asked by the "AMODEM75.COM" file; which happens to be some sort of file needed by this new Amodem. The new Amodem ads a bunch of additions which I shall now go into.

The biggest addition to the Amodem 7.4x and 7.50 terminal programs is the new Y-modem transfer capabilities. Y-modem lets one transfer 1024K blocks as opposed to X-modem's 128K. The more blocks in the transfer make transmitting files over the modem much quicker with a 1200 baud modem and higher. Most Atari ST BBS'es use Y-modem, some IBM boards are Y-modem, and some Atari 8-bit BBS'es are starting to follow suit. Already, Y-modem is becoming the new standard, quickly destabilizing X-modem and X-modem CRC.

Y-modem was included with the Amodem 7.4x series. Now, with Amodem 7.50, this process is taken a bit further. It has added Y-modem batch receive. For all those who are unfamiliar with this technique, it is the process of a BBS letting a person mark all the files he wants to D/l, and them sending them all at once in a "Batch" send. Using the concept similar to SpartaDos'es "STARTUP.BAT" file. Most ST BBS'es use this (at least FoReM) and some IBM boards. I have found this to save plenty of time when wanting to D/l more than one file. The real trick is not to get caught in a rush and accidently Y-modem batch to a disk with not enough room.

Amodem 7.50 doesn't stop there though. Among other things, it adds a edit window with Crtl-E, word wrapping with Crtl-W, the help file on disk to free up 5120 for disk transfers, inproved autodial scanning (ala Express!) and macros (als Backtalk!), plus!! Amodem now is capable of being that link to transfer files direct, such as with a Null Modem cable. With a hidden Crtl-B command, Amodem 7.50 can go from 600bps-1800-4800-9600bps! Excellent if you want to transfer files from the 8-bit to the ST or IBM.

I like Amodem 7.50, but still maybe not as much as 850 Express! ver3.00p. I like the ease of use of Express!'es macros as compared to Amodems. I played with Backtalk quite a bit and found it quite fustrating at times, and this is what Amodem's macro's seem to emulate. I may play around with them, but so far Express! has the edge there. I like the easier menu with Express! and some of those functions that Amodem just doesn't have. Though I am getting used to using Amodem now and use both Amodem 7.50 and 850 Express! Ver.3.00p equally, once Keith Ledbetter comes out with a Express! that supports Y-modem and Y-modem Batch, I will probably use Amodem only on occasions. But for now, I love Y-modem, and since Amodem is a very very good term program, using it in with Express! for whichever serves my need at the time will suit me just fine!

TERMinal Problems!
by The (HNY ATARI) TERMINATOR

"Captain's Log, Stardate 070687-2138...."

With all due respect to my fellow modemers, I was feebaly supposed to write a summery of what was happening online,but alas, I was, How do you say, "missplaced", (my caretakers desided to take me fishing)

So here I was (is,am,whatever) disconnected from the network, when I finally found out how much I really needed modeming! To say the least, I don't mind staring at a video screen for hours on end, just to pick up a fragment of useful(or useless) information in the message bases! (frankly because I cant seriously Download any programs with this MPP)

Well, anyways, if you dont already know, Modeming is like NO other aspect of computing, it can be EXTREMLY helpful, educating, and POWERFUL! among all other things. For instance, most of the programs on the monthly disk, are PUBLIC DOMAIN programs, for disribution and use by anyone, these programs would not be there if it was not for Modeming, because these programs are distributed by people UPLOADING them to the Bulletin Board Systems, for people to Download and send someplace else. But the Transfer of programs is just a mere blip in the curcuitry compared to the Power of the message bases, and E-Mail.

In my opinion, these Message Bases, which started the whole modeming Business are a Godsend! Ask a question, and 9 times out of 10 it will be answered whithin 24 hrs, or less. and I mean any question! (nomatter HOW stupid you think it is!!!), and the subject matter can be about anything, because someone out there can answer it! (Ask Debby!)

E-Mail is another thing, and it is extremely helpful, when you MUST contact another Modemer, as this is checked upon login on most systems.

I guess I could give you some numbers to call.. These are all local from The Buffalo (716) area Code..

BATES MOTEL -- Home of WNYAUG
24 hrs daily, 5 meg HD
875-7376

The CAT'S LAIR -- 337-3628
this system is under construction
and when finished will be most
impressive boasting of a MIO,HD,and
2400 baud

THINK TANK -- 835-5802
formarly running off a 130xe,
this board is also expanding its
Horizons, and and such...

Ad addendum, I will need help with this column, as I only go on no more than 10 BBS a nite, (every nite) I cannot be active on every Board, and Exist at the same time.

"Facinating Captain..."
This is TERM!, signing out..

We At Conan
by Debby R.

I have really come a long way since I started modeming in February. In this short amount of time I have written a couple of articles for the Pokey, become Co-SysOp of Conan and I now have my own message base. What more could a person ask for! I guess that I can now tell you how some things are on the other side of the computer.

We at Conan have a great time running the BBS. There are those exceptions to this rule. The board does not always run as smooth as we would like. Equipment breaks down and programs need modifications from time to time. Both these problems are frustrating for the users and the SysOp's. One error gets fixed and another one is waiting in the wings to show itself. It seems that we have had more than our share of problems lately. Some times a user may not even know that there are problems with the system. Bob Guich spends many hours working on Conan even though some people think he never looks at it. SysOp's are a rare breed of people. They work many hours with little thanks but much fullfillment when someone notices their efforts.

On top of the normal problems that happen on a board, there are the problems with some of the users. It seems that some people dream of ways to try and stay one step ahead of the SysOp. We all are aware of some of the ways they mess things up for the rest of us. Maybe giving them space here makes them think their efforts are worthwhile, but we promise to stay one step ahead of you! One thing that had to be done at Conan was to make everyone re-sign up. We are sorry for this inconvience but it was neccesary. Before new members are validated the information they leave will be checked and may be checked periodically. Bob was very liberal before having so much trouble. Its ashame that a few have to make it difficult for the many.

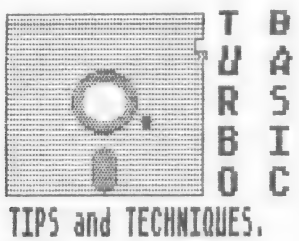
If you must wait a day or two to be validated or have a

question answered, please be patient. After all SysOp's have jobs, some go to school and they also deserve a social life too. Don't ask for a higher level on any BBS. Higher levels are given to those people who contribute to the board. They are also given at the descretion of the SysOp. Maybe one post or upload may gain you a higher level on one BBS but that may not work on another. Each BBS has their own guidelines for higher levels.

We are always trying to bring the users new downloads and strive to keep the message bases interesting and up to date. I sometimes wonder how a BBS can have so many users and so few posters. It seems that the same handfull of people do most of the posting on all the boards. When this happens we are called a click. I have never thought that I was joining a click on any BBS. It may be hard to find a subject that you feel comfortable in responding to but that should be your only reason for not posting a message. We are always open to all subjects of conversation as long as they are in good taste. We felt that a different type of message base was needed on Conan. Along came the "Dear Debby" message base. Since it started out well, we thought that this was the base to get new posters. It has an anonymous feature that few other boards have. Included in the base were questions that have no right or wrong answers. They were 'thought' questions based on human nature. Problems of all kinds are discussed with a wide variety of answers and possible solutions.

If you have any ideas on how to make your favorite BBS more interesting, let the SysOp know. They are always trying to give the BBS what you want. Afetr all, it is running for your enjoyment. The next time you call a BBS maybe let the SysOp know how much you appreciate there efforts. Maybe it could be your first post! If you like all the downloads offered, remember that in order to keep them up to date you must contribute uploads. If your one of the folks who just likes reading the posts, then you must respond in order to keep the conversation going.

I hope that everyone has a better understanding of the time involved in running your favorite BBS. Most SysOp's will probally agree with most of what I have said here. Let Atari people be the models for other modemers.



TIPS and TECHNIQUES.

by Dave Arlington

Well, we'll touch on a couple things this month. First we'll look in the old TURBO BASIC mailbox, then finish up the discussion from last month on why there are normally no inverse characters available in Graphics 1, and finish up with a close-up look at a another command unique to TURBO BASIC.

First to the mailbox. One reader wrote (I'm sorry I l[illegible] the post card with his name on it.) in to ask about possibly getting the source code for TURBO BASIC so he could fix it to be used with his favorite DOS, SPARTADOS. I'm afraid the two will never go together becuase they both occupy some of the same portion of memory. This is also the reason TURBO BASIC only works on the XL/XE series. Both SPARTADOS 3.2 and TURBO BASIC use the 'hidden' 16K above BASIC. BASIC XE and Genie are two other programs that share some of the same space. SPARTADOS was rewritten to accomodate BASIC XE, but I think it highly doubtful they will bother for TURBO BASIC.

The second letter comes from Mr. George Poletti of Cinnaminson, NJ. Mr. Poletti writes:

Dear Dave Yearke,

I'm a member of JACS (Jersey Atari Computer Society). I obtained a copy of TURBO BASIC thru them and am very pleased with it. However, I've come across a few problems that you can help me with.

I'm running TEXT TIDIER (I've run and used it several times). One day, I had a very lengthy file, about 6500 bytes, I think. I set the maximum file size, in reference to TIDIER, at 20,000. After it finished 'tidying', I couldn't find it on the disk I recorded on. I'm pretty sure I had everything set up right. Can you provide any clues?

Also, I have an article by you called "TEXT TIDIER 1.0". In it, you say, "It also breaks down the file into smaller pieces that will fit into a word processor ... " If I had a file I wanted to break down, how would I be able to know where to pick up the second part of the file, after I had 'tidied' the first?

I sure would appreciate knowing how to use TEXT TIDIER a little better, becuase I don't think I'm using it to its full capacity. I usually print what I have tidied, rather than edit it with AtariWrite Plus, mostly becuase I haven't figured out how yet. I have a 130XE Atari. Thank you for your attention.

Yours Truly,
George Poletti

I'll be passing your letter along to Dave, Mr. Poletti. In the meantime, I will try to answer your questions and if Dave has any corrections to my answers I will try to have them for next month.

In the case of the disappearing file, there could be quite a few reasons. One that comes to mind is this: In the WRITE_FILE procedure, a file is opened, a big block of data is written with the BPUT command (the opposite of last month's BGET command), and then the file is closed. Now if for some reason, the program should fail BEFORE closing the file,

disaster can happen. Anytime a file is opened for writing and is not closed properly when done, will result in the filename in question disappearing from the directory. If you use DOS 2.5, DISKFIX should find it for you and tell you it was opened for write and never closed. (assuming, of course, that that is what happened.)

As far as splitting files up is concerned, TEXT TIDIER works like this. Let's say you downloaded some monster text file from a service that is 60,000 bytes long (approx. 480 SD sectors) and your W.P. does not handle files that size. You give TIDIER a limit of say 10,000 bytes and TIDIER will split the big file into several little files as close to the 10,000 byte size as possible. It is all automatic and you do not have to 'pick' up the file anywhere. TIDIER will also try not to split words across two files. Each file in sucession will be consecutively numbered. In our example, the files might be named SPLIT.001, SPLIT.002, SPLIT.003, ... up to SPLIT.006. Then just load each consecutive file into your Word Processor and then print them out. If you have an Include file command like PaperClip does, you can link them together that way for one long continous print.

Now for a very brief discussion about why there are normally no inverse characters available in Graphics 1. (If you weren't here last month, the character set has to be redefined to get inverse letters in Graphics 1.) If you notice the size of the character set in last month's TurboTips column, you will see it is 1024 bytes long. Each character is 8 bytes stacked on top of each other. 1024 divided by 8 tells us there are only 128 characters in the Atari character set. However, if you look in any Atari book that shows the character set, you notice there are 256 characters, first the normal ones, then all the inverse ones.

From last month, you saw it was pretty easy to redefine a character set to be its own inverse. Atari didn't waste memory by having almost two identical sets of characters in memory, one normal, one inverse. They simply use a bit somewhere. If the bit is 0, it displays one set. If it is 1, they use the trick from last month to display the inverse of the set. (make all the ones in the character bytes zero and make all the zero bytes, one.) What does this have to do with Graphics 1? Well, the bit that normally says, display inverse or normal, is now being used to help determine the color of the Graphics 1 text. The other helper bit is the bit that says whether lower or upper case is in effect. Between the two bits, there are four combinations of on and off which represent the possible four colors of Graphics 1 text.

Hopefully it will be obvious by now that if we are using these bits to decide what color the letters are going to be, then they can't be used at the same time to make inverse or lowercase letters in Graphics 1. This is also the reason, we cannot mix upper and lower case letters in Graphics 1 without again redefining the letters to look like something else.

Now let's take a close-up look at a couple commands unique to TURBO BASIC, DPEEK and DPOKE. As some of you know, the heart of your computer is the 6502 microprocessor. This chip is capable of using 2 bytes to find any location in memory. Since a byte can hold 256 numbers in it, normally your computer can look at any one of 256 x 256 or 65536 (64K) memory locations at a given moment. Now, of course, there are 6502 machines that have 128, 320, 576, and even 1088K of memory. However, even these upgraded machines can only have a maximum of 64K visible to the 6502 at any one time.

Anyways, to make a short story long, with two bytes, you can get to any memory location in your computer. In normal BASIC, the PEEK and POKE commands only work with one byte at a time. To find a memory location the computer is storing as two bytes, we have to do some wierd stuff like this:

```
100 DLIST=PEEK(560)+PEEK(561)*256
```

which gives us the memory address where the display list instrcutions currently are stored. In TURBO BASIC, this becomes much easier to do with the DPEEK command:

```
100 DLIST=DPEEK(560)
```

Now let's say you want the computer to find a custom display list you stored in page 6 (memory location 1536 would be the beginning). It is even more awkward to do with regular Atari BASIC:

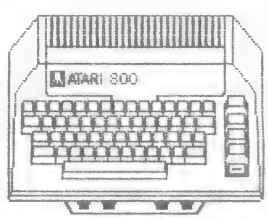
```
100 NWDLIST=1536
110 NWDLISTHI=INT(NWDLIST/256)
120 NWDLISTLO=NWDLIST-256*NWDLISTHI
130 POKE 560,NWDLISTLO
140 POKE 561,NWDLISTHI
```

And in TURBO BASIC:

```
100 NWDLIST=1536:DPOKE 560,NWDLIST
```

And that's it! As you can see, it makes getting to memory locations as easy for you as it is for your 6502.

That's also all from the TURBO BASIC corner this month. See you next month!



WordFind in Pascal

Charles P. Lichtenwalner - JACS

The following program WORDFIND has been written in KYAN Pascal to generate arrays of letters with words embedded in them.

The interface to the program is based on a BASIC program from the January 1984 ANTIC. WORDFIND will ask for a file of words to fit into the array. If no file exists, type in "NEW" at which point WORDFIND will ask for the filename. Type in the words one at a time with a carriage return at the end of each word. Typing "END" will tell WORDFIND that all the words have been entered. The next prompt is for the size of the array. I recommend something between a 10x10 array and a 30x30 array. WORDFIND will then try to place the words it reads off the file. As I intended the program primarily for elementary age children, all the words run left to right and/or top to bottom. Each time WORDFIND tries another location or orientation (chosen at random) it prints a period on the screen. After placing all the words from the file in the array, the program prompts for a title for the puzzle (15 characters). WORDFIND then prints a "cheat sheet" of all the words in the array with unused spaces filled with a "%". Finally, the true WordFind puzzle is printed with the unused spaces filled with random letters, and a list of the words used is printed at the bottom.

The puzzle array is printed as double width characters. The control code in the WRITE (printer,chr(14)) may have to be changed if your printer's control code is not the same as a BMC 80 printer.

Each week I print out a WordFind puzzle of my children's spelling lists. Their teachers like the extra exposure to the spelling words this gives the students, and the kids seem to enjoy solving the puzzle.

If anyone needs a runable version of this program, please let me know.

```
PROGRAM WORDFIND;
(% BY C. P. LICHTENWALNER  DEC 1986
AFTER A BASIC PROGRAM IN ANTIC JAN 1984
IN PASCAL "Copyright 1986 by Kyan Soft-
ware, Inc."
%)

CONST
  MAXSTRING=15;
TYPE
  PUZZLETYP=ARRAY[1..30,1..30] OF CHAR;
  STRING = ARRAY[1..maxstring] OF CHAR;
  FILENAME = ARRAY[1..17] OF CHAR;
VAR
  PUZZLE : PUZZLETYP;
  WRDLST : ARRAY[1..50] OF STRING;
  TTL,WORD : STRING;
  WORDFILENAME:FILENAME;
  WORDFILE,PRINTER:TEXT;
  PSZ : INTEGER;
  I,J,WORDCNT:INTEGER;
  RANDOMPTR:^CHAR;

FUNCTION LENGTH(VAR A1:STRING):INTEGER;
VAR
  I:INTEGER;
BEGIN
  I:=MAXSTRING;
  WHILE ((A1[I]=' ') AND (I>1))
    DO I:=I-1;
  LENGTH:=I;
END;

FUNCTION RAND256:INTEGER;
BEGIN
  RAND256:=ORD(RANDOMPTR^);
END;

FUNCTION FITIT(WRD:STRING; WRDCNT:INTEGER) : BOOLEAN;
VAR
  I,X,X1,X2,Y,Y1,Y2:INTEGER;
  FITTRUE:BOOLEAN;

FUNCTION FIT(X,X1,Y,Y1:INTEGER;WRD:STRING):BOOLEAN;
VAR
  I,X2,Y2:INTEGER;
  INBOUNDS,FITS : BOOLEAN;
BEGIN
  I :=0;
  fits:=true;
  repeat
  i:=i+1;
  X2:=X+X1*I;  Y2:=Y+Y1*I;
  INBOUNDS:=(X2 > 0) AND (Y2 > 0) AND (X2 <= PSZ) AND  (Y2
<= PSZ);
  IF INBOUNDS THEN
    FITS:=fits      and       (PUZZLE[X2,Y2]='%')       OR
(PUZZLE[X2,Y2]=WORD[I])
  ELSE
    FITS:=FALSE;
  until ((not fits) or (I>LENGTH(WORD)));
     write('.');
  fit:=fits
END;

BEGIN
  I:=0;
  REPEAT
    I:=I+1;
    X:=1 + RAND256 MOD PSZ;
    Y:=1 + RAND256 MOD PSZ;
    REPEAT
```

```
      Y1:=RAND256 MOD 2;
      X1:=(RAND256 MOD 3) -1;
    UNTIL  NOT(((X1=0)  AND  (Y1=0))   OR   ((X1=-1)   AND
(Y1=0)));
    FITTRUE:=FIT(X,X1,Y,Y1,WRD);
    IF (I MOD 200)=0 THEN WRITELN;
  UNTIL FITTRUE OR (I)((WRDCNT+1)*25+10));
  IF FITTRUE THEN BEGIN
    FITIT:=TRUE;
    writeln;
    FOR I:=1 TO LENGTH(WRD) DO BEGIN
      X2:=X+X1*I;  Y2:=Y+Y1*I;
      PUZZLE[X2,Y2]:=WRD[I];
    END;
  END
  ELSE BEGIN
    FITIT:=FALSE;
    WRITELN;
    WRITELN('*** ',WRD:LENGTH(WRD),' DOESNT FIT');
  END
END;

PROCEDURE PRINTOUT;
VAR
  I,J,SPACES:INTEGER;
  SPACESTR:ARRAY[1..80] OF CHAR;
BEGIN
  REWRITE(PRINTER,'P:');
  WRITELN(PRINTER,CHR(12));  (*FORMFEED*)
  WRITELN(printer);WRITELN(printer);
  SPACES:=trunc((80-LENGTH(TTL))/2);
  FOR I:=1 TO 80 DO
    SPACESTR[I]:=' ';
  WRITE(printer,SPACESTR:SPACES);
  SPACES:=LENGTH(TTL);
  WRITELN(printer,TTL:SPACES);
  WRITELN(printer);WRITELN(printer);
  SPACES:=trunc((80-2*PSZ)/2);
  FOR I :=1 TO PSZ DO BEGIN
    WRITE(printer,SPACESTR:SPACES);
    write(printer,chr(14));  (*DOUBLE WIDTH CHARACTERS*)
    FOR J:=1 TO PSZ DO
      WRITE(printer,PUZZLE[I,J]);
    WRITELN(printer);
  END;
  WRITELN(printer);WRITELN(printer);
  FOR I:=1 TO WORDCNT DO BEGIN
    IF ((I MOD 4)=0) THEN
      WRITELN(printer,WRDLST[I]:19)
    ELSE
      WRITE(printer,WRDLST[I]:19)
  END;
  WRITELN(printer);
END;

PROCEDURE GETINPUT;
VAR
  ANS:FILENAME;
  WORD:STRING;
  I,len,NUMWORD:INTEGER;
BEGIN
  WRITELN('       WORDFIND IN PASCAL');
  WRITELN;
  NUMWORD:=0;
  WRITELN(' INPUT WORDS FILENAME');
  WRITELN(' OR "NEW" TO CREATE A NEW WORDS FILE )');
  READLN(ANS);
  IF ((ANS[1]='N') AND (ANS[2]='E') AND (ANS[3]='W')) THEN
BEGIN
    WRITE('FILENAME TO PUT WORDS ON )');    READLN(ANS);
    REWRITE(WORDFILE,ANS);
    WRITELN('ENTER WORDS THEN "END"');
    writeln('when finished.');
    NUMWORD:=1;
    WRITE('WORD # ',NUMWORD:2);
    READLN(WORD);
    REPEAT
      len:=length(word);
      WRITELN(WORDFILE,WORD:len);
      NUMWORD:=NUMWORD+1;
      WRITE('WORD # ',NUMWORD:2);
      READLN(WORD);
    UNTIL    ((WORD[1]='E')    AND    (WORD[2]='N')    AND
(WORD[3]='D'));
  END
  ELSE
    wordfilename:=ans;
  WRITE('PUZZLE SIZE (10-30) )');
  READLN(PSZ);
END;

BEGIN
  RANDOMPTR:=POINTER(-11766);
  GETINPUT;
  RESET(WORDFILE,WORDFILENAME);
  FOR I :=1 TO PSZ DO BEGIN
    FOR J :=1 TO PSZ DO
      PUZZLE[I,J]:='*'
  END;
  WORDCNT:=0;
  WHILE NOT EOF(WORDFILE) DO BEGIN
    READLN(WORDFILE,WORD);
    WRITELN(WORD:LENGTH(WORD));
    IF FITIT(WORD,WORDCNT) THEN BEGIN
      WORDCNT:=WORDCNT+1;
       WRDLST[WORDCNT]:=WORD;
    END;
  END;
  WRITE('TITLE FOR PUZZLE )');
  READLN(TTL);
  PRINTOUT;
  for i:=1 to psz do begin
    for j:=1 to psz do
      if puzzle[i,j]='*' then
        puzzle[i,j]:=chr((rand256 mod 26)+ord('A'));
  end;
  printout
END.
```

BOP'N WRESTLE
REVIEW by *JOHN SHEEHAN*

As a child, my favorite TV show was Batman and Robin. Religiously at three-thirty, I would follow the exploits of the Dynamic Duo, and afterwards, much to the dismay of my mother, I would act out the day's episode (merely venting childhood frustrations). The children of today tragically no longer have Batman and Robin, but give new meaning to the word mayhem with the heros of the World Wrestling Federation. Much to the dismay of all mothers, (most anyway) wrestling is easier and much more dangerous to act out then Batman. (Have you ever tried to climb the living room wall with a plastic grapling hook?) Now, precisely at two o'clock every Saturday, thousands of six year olds come crying to mommy because big brother just pile drived him/her on the kitchen floor.

Well mothers of America, despair no longer. Mindscape publishing has come to the rescue with a sure classic. BOP'N WRESTLE provides all the fun and excitement of pro wrestling, and won't leave dents in the kitchen floor. Bop'n Wrestle gives the would be Hulk Hogan control over two dozen of wrestling's most devestating moves; including: the head but, the body slam, and yes even the sinister pile driver. The game can be played by one or two players with joysticks or keyboard controls, and each player can choose to be one of the ten very nasty characters. The graphics and sound are excellent, and offer realism un-rivaled on the eight bit Atari. The manuel provided with the game clearly shows all the moves possible with diagrams of joystick positions, or if you prefer, with letter combinations on the keyboard. Break in time for the program is about half an hour, after which, even the neophyte gamer will have a full arsenal of moves. Granted though, it does take time and patience to learn your way around the game. Without a doubt, it is much more fun to play with another person rather than the computer. You'll find them grimacing in pain as their player is slamed to the mat.

The only drawback that I found was that it is to easy to become a program wrestler; that is, using the same strategy and moves all the time. But, by employing a little variety, this is definitely one of the finest games available to the eight bit user.

As a final thought, I would like to mention the unbelieveable female attraction to this game. Maybe it's the satisfaction they get by beating the pulp out of their husbands or boyfriends. Or, perhaps it is the alluring possibility of a perfectly executed flying body press and submissive pin?

SEE SELECTED SAVINGS BELOW

EDITORS FOOTNOTE:Each month John plans to review a selection of software and offer a discount coupon good for the purchase of that software at his Dads store, Computer Challenge.

WNYAUG SELECTIVE SAVINGS

THE COMPUTER CHALLENGE OFFERS 10% OFF THE REGULAR PRICE OF SELECTED SOFTWARE TO THE MEMBERS OF WNYAUG. OFFER HOLDS FOR OUT OF STOCK ITEMS ORDERED WITH DEPOSIT.

TITLES: BOP'N WRESTLE

SEE COMPLETE LIST IN STORE EXPIRES:

"Bounty Bob Strikes Back"
by Blake Arnold

You'll never guess what I just got! "Bounty Bob Strikes Back" for my Atari 800. Sure, it's been out for a while (a few years maybe?), but I just got it a few days ago. In case you're not familiar with the game, it's similar to Donkey Kong, but has a twist. Bob (the chubby little guy that you control) has to go retrieve things that were abandoned in an old uranium mine. He also has to cover (walk on) all of the platforms; they fill in with color as he walks on them. If Bob leaves so much as one section without walking on it, he wont be allowed to leave that level. Being a uranium mine, the place is radioactive, and we all know what that does to life forms, don't we? Thats right, it mutates them! In the mine there are mutated creatures; should Bob touch one, he is instantly fried (fried may be an understatement!), or if he lingers too long in a room he will die of radiation poisoning. If Bob successfully (good luck) completes a room, he is sent to the next level.

Each of the levels is a little harder than the other, but there is a way to skip some rooms. If you complete a certain number of rooms, you may see a secret message that will allow you to "warp" directly to that room again, without having to complete the entire series again (just think, I know a few of the warps... but I'm not telling you where they are!). The game is supposed to be the sequel to "Miner 2049'er". I feel a little sorry for Bob this time, though. This new version is a lot harder than the old "Miner 2049'er" was, even on its easiest screen. There's also lots of new devices to get Bob around; there are suction tubes (like huge vacuum

cleaners..they suck Bob up at one place and put him down at another), elaborate slides, more hoists, and more moving platforms. There's so much going on in this new (?) game that it's unusual not to see at least one of those devices in a room. In fact, if you DON'T see one, sweat! Chances are if there's not one of them in the room, Bob has got some heavy-duty jumping to do! Thats another point where this new (ok, "not so new") version differs; Bob can make jumps of different length by moving the joystick one way or the other (this can lead to sudden death if you forget about it and make Bob jump a little too far).

I've managed to struggle (like I said, this game is HARD) through quite a few of the screens on this game, and so far they've all offered more of a challenge that the "Zone 10" level of "Miner 2049'er". The game contains many options that make it a constant challenge to play (or a little easier, if you like it that way). It's a well done game and, like the original, addictive. In fact, if you'll excuse me, I think I'll go see if I can beat my neighbors high score. "Bounty Bob Strikes Back" is from Big Five Software, but I'm not sure if they're still in business. If you'd like to buy "Bounty Bob Strikes Back" (it's a cartridge), the best places to try would be the large mail-order houses, or the places that specialize in rare merchandise like that, such as American TV, B & C Computervisions, or Electronic One (all advertise in ANALOG).

Reprinted from ANALOGS Online Magazine

A SYNAPSE RETROSPECTIVE

by Dave Arlington

Since so many are crying these days that there is no new software for the Atari 8-bit computers, and since Keith told me this issue of POKEY was going to be devoted to games, I thought I would inaugurate a new series that looks back to some of the better companies in Atari's past. I'll take a look at where they went right, where they went wrong, and where they are today. I thought I'd start with one of the more interesting stories, that of SYNAPSE SOFTWARE.

In late 1983, early 1984, SYNAPSE was at or near the top of the ATARI software heap. People would go into computer stores looking eagerly to see what their latest game would be. They virtually took a stranglehold on the Atari 8-bit speadsheet and database market that still exists to this day. And yet, in 1987, SYNAPSE SOFTWARE mainly exists simply as a title on some BRODERBUND software. How did they go from the top to the bottom in three years? Let's take a look.

What first propelled SYNAPSE to the top was their excellent games. Mostly of the arcade/puzzle type, these games had graphics and sound that were way ahead of their time. SYNAPSE games also had that elusive quality of playability. That is, a game must be easy enough for you to feel you accomplished something, and on the other hand, difficult enough for you to want to play again. The other thing a lot of their games had going for them was originality. A lot of the concepts for SYNAPSE games were ideas that no one had ever seen before (or will ever see again). Even the titles that were derivative had great improvements over the originals (with a couple exceptions I'll point out in a minute).

Here are some of the SYNAPSE sucesses: (not necessarily saleswise)

NECROMANCER This has to rank with one of the most original game ideas ever. You are a wizard who has to raise an army or trees to destroy an evil wizard. What made this game so great was the spuerb graphics and the excellent mood music and sound effects. There were three screens. In the first screen, your wizard stands in the middle ot the screen throwing out seeds that grow into tree warriors. The trees had faces like out of a Disney movie. Dwarves with clubs run out from the sides to try to club the trees before they reach full height. You have to stop the dwarves while still planting trees. In the meantime, a sort of one-eyed pogo stick that carries more seeds is bouncing around the screen while a deadly poisonous spider is trying to make your trees sick. When the spider infects them, they get a horrible crying face on them until you can either cure them or they die.

That's just the first screen. the second screen is the vaults where the spiders hatch from eggs. You have to plant your tree warriors on top of the vaults where their roots take hold and eventually the tree falls through and crushs the egg. That is, of course, if your wizard or the tree does not get grabbed by the ever-present hands reaching from above or if the spider does not hatch and try to poison you.

The final screen involves meeting the evil wizard and all his spiders you could not stop in the previous screens in a deserted graveyard.

As you can see, this game included more features and excitement than even many games today. The graphics and sound match the exciting game concept.

ENCOUNTER was an underpublicized game that took the BATTLEZONE arcade concept and improved it. Featuring some of the best scrolling 3-D graphics ever seen, this game was so realistic that when you got hit by one of the periodic homing missles, you actually would flinch.

SHAMUS:CASE II was a sequel to another popular game that was even better than the original. Invading the castle of your arch-enemy The Shadow, the Shamus must face some deadly dangers. There were three types of rooms. The first type had ladders (that in higher levels would sometime disappear while you were on them), spiked pits, and roving poisonous snakes. The second type of room had blocks you had to leap across while avoiding the above snakes. The third type of room was an arcade junkies dream. Waves and waves of underwater creatures

attack trying to either shoot you, touch you, or knock out all the floor underneath you to throw you back to the previous room. Not to mention the bird that flies out and also tries to shoot you. To get through these rooms (and there were about 30 if them!) you had to be able to watch the entire screen at once. As you make your way through this deadly castle, you have to pick up tresure chests and keys without which your quest is doomed.

BLUE MAX was a very popular game that didn't have super graphics and was kind of a ZAXXON type game. However, it was that playable type I was talking about above. You just knew if you played JUST one more time, you would get farther than you had before. As you covered the scrolling landscape looking for enemy planes or bombing ground targets, you had to watch to make periodic landings to refuel or make repairs. One unique thing about BLUE MAX was that it was real in the sense you only had one plane and if it got shot down or ran out of fuel, the game was over. No mysterious second or third planes that appear out of nowhere.

Last but not least, if you do any kind of spreadsheet or database work on your Atari, 99% of you already know about SYNCALC and SYNFILE. Simply put, SYNCALC blew away it's main competitor, VISICALC in every way. It was/is easier to use with pop-up menus and extra features like variable column width that VISICALC just did not have. And while I'm not personally crazy about SYNFILE (it seems to crash a lot of disks and the Reports functions is weak) it does share the feature of being very easy to use and learn. In fact, SYNFILE even includes a tutorial disk in addition to the extremely well written manual.

So with all these great things going for them, what happened to SYNAPSE? Well, it was an unfortunate set of circumstances that all seemed to happen at the same time in late 1984. First of all, SYNAPSE had an agreement with ATARI to develop the SYN-APPLICATIONS series for ATARI under the ATARI name for a good deal of money. Except that after SYNAPSE had done most of the work, ATARI got sold to Jack Tramiel and SYNAPSE got hung out to dry.

At the same time, the bottom was dropping out on the video games SYNAPSE excelled at. The market was glutted with titles and the SYNAPSE line did poorly at this time for a few reasons. Their artwork, on both product packaging and magazine advertisements was a garish cartoony type that was way too busy. By the term too busy, I mean, so much stuff is in the picture, you can't tell easily what the product is about. Next to the ELECTRONIC ARTS products, with their beautiful packaging, that were beginning to proliferate, the SYNAPSE line looked very cheap.

It didn't help that at this time, they released a few dogs. The heavily promoted DIMENSION X with its touted scrolling 3-D graphics was an obviously rushed product that did not even match the pictures on the back of the box. Not only that, but DIMENSION X was a total rip-off of the STAR RAIDERS gameplay. BLUE MAX 2001 was another bowzer that tried to capitalize on the first BLUE MAX. Unfortunately, it was totally unplayable and the graphics were very ugly to look

And then there was one of computer history's greatest lemons, the RELAX package. Consisting of a Bio-Feedback headband and accompanying software, this is an idea that could have only come from California! At a $100.00 price tag, not even many Californians bought this Edsel.

The end result of all these unfortunate circumstances happening at once, left SYNAPSE in a very shaky financial situation that ended when they were bought out by BRODERBUND. Now the SYNAPSE name lives on just SYNFILE and SYNCALC and on a few bargain basement closeout sales. Such a pity.

Only WE Can Do It

An Opinion by:
James E. (Ziggy)

I'm getting sick of everbody complaining that there is no new software for the Eight-Bit computers. Ever since I have joined the HNYAUG I have seen everbody complain about no new software, but nobody doing anything about it. At least ever other Pokey issue has somebody writing an artical about the lack of new software. HELL I'M SICK OF IT!!

For once we are going to do something about it. Instead of writing letters to various software developers FIRST. I have thought of a better plan that's gonna knock the socks off of every software developer in this country. If anything is going to be done about the lack of software for the Atari 8-BIT's, it's going to have to be a joint effort of all atari owners and clubs, bbs's and anything else that can be associated with the Atari 8-BIT's.

My Plan is simple. Everyone that owns a BBS is going to put up a Database article on the lack of software, IN A LETTER FORM. The people that use the BBS'S can use that as a letter that they can send to various software developers and especially ATARI. I figure that with all the different BBS's, their will be plenty of different letter formates. Also, since this is a very limited way to get letters to software developers, WE have to send letters to as many ATARI USER GROUPS as possible. Explain the plan to them and then hope that they follow suit. If the plan goes well, all the software developers will start getting thousands upon thousands of letters frowning upon thier lack of software that they have coming out for the 8-BIT's.

I hope that this article is enough to get people talking

about doing it. If enough people talk about it, maybe even at the next meeting, we might get a mailing list and some volunteers that will write some lettes to the various USER GROUPS. Also the Sysops and Co-sysops of BBS's will write letters on thier BBS'S so that the average Atari owner can just D/l the file and sign thier name on it before they send it out to ATARI and other software developers.

Wouldn't you love to play Bard'S Tale on an Atari 8-BIT? Instead of just wishing for it? Or how about some of those titles that Commador has? I think Commador 64 has a whole lot more games coming out for it than the 8-BIT's. In fact, we should emphasize protection on the software so that they won't complain about the massive pirating that goes on. Thier are techniques that can be done. I'm sure that if software developers can protect thier software now, I'm possitivly sure that protection can still be done. We would get better games. Games that have style, instead of being a rehash of an older type of the same game.

I only wish is that people start writing to the software delvelopers instead of just reading articles like mine. AND MAKE SURE YOU ALSO WRITE TO ATARI! EVEN IF YOU ONLY SEND ONE LETTER TO ONE OTHER SOFTWARE DEVELPER!

Another thing I wanted to express my opinion about is having a yearly Expo for atari computers. I figure that if we had an Expo every year, it would not be as hectic as the first one that we had this year. We could get the same people that we had last year, and tell them that we are going to have one every year. It would be a smite smaller in the sense that we might not have so many "extras" because we would have more software developers coming in. After a couple of years, more and more "extras" would come into play. Eventually surpassing what this years Expo was like.

We may even be able to entice software developers that this area is perfect for thier business. Telling them that this area is perfect for upbeat companies. After all, we are trying to get new, more technological companies to move into the Buffalo, NNY area. If we can get some interest involved, we could do what Toronto did. More than one city has gone "high tech" and became a nicer, more populated, and less polluted. I was reading in National Geographic this month and they have an article on Indianapolis, and how they became an "enriched" city after going "high tech".

The Electronic MAG, Issue #3
by Mat‡Rat and friends

Matty's Rap - CES a Final Look

Since CES, all I've been doing is studying press releases and working on the CES article for ANALOG. There is a LOT of information here to digest, many new things going on for the ST - but the XE realm, outside of Ataris own corridors, is very quiet. The review software I did get for the XE systems was typically two to 5 years old (yes 5, one NEW REVIEW copy of a program with a copyright of 1982 in it!). The only ROSE in a field of ragedy old dandylions was Award Ware from High Tech Expressions. It is very similar to Certificate Maker from Springboard Publishing (which is available for the ST Atari only, not the XE). Award Ware is actually more flexible in allowing you to cut and paste certain page layouts - something Certificate Maker doesn't. Award Ware supports a lot of printers, even the Epson LQ800 (Nec P6) 24 pin printer. The program even has its own integral printer driver construction utility. With the introduction of the XEGS (XE Game System) cartridge software will make a comeback for the XE systems. This is good fortune for us indeed. We will finally see some new software, and releases of Atari cartridge classics (Star Raiders, Missile Command, etc.). For relative newcommers to the Atari 8bit computers, these classics will be NEW to them - since they have been out of production for some time. Since cartridges, with Atari's new bank switch technology (which allows a cartridge to go all the way up to 256K bytes), are tough to pirate, maybe more 3rd parties will license their code to Atari to publish in ROM form. I'm hopeful that we will see Ballblazer (a FANTASTIC game, terribly underrated) and Rescue on Fractalus in cartridges by the end of '87. Battlezone is being developed for XEGAS too!

Atari was very excited over the fact that they sold 100,000 units, XE computers, to Poland. Insiders tell me that if Atari is so excited over such a relatively small sale (Osborne used to sell that many computers every month), then the 8bit product line must be in real trouble! If the XEGS doesn't take off and sell like hotcakes against the movin' machines, Nintendo and Sega home game systems, the XE line may disappear soon. Do yourself a favor and invest in the future of your 8bit computer, go out and buy a program today. Do you have any pirated programs? Reformat the disks. Do you have any pirated programs that you use frequently? If so, reformat the disks and purchase legit copies! Please! If the XE product line dies while you have pirated software in your library, you can tell yourself, "I helped do that." Me? If the 8bit Atari computers go away, so do I. I've got my eye on a nice little PC AT compatible. I don't want to defect, but it seems to be one of the few machines around that still has a future. Enough with the gloom and doom, the rest of this article is for the ST folks out there.

The "thing" to do with games these days seems to be simulate submarines. Why I don't know, but Microprose has

Silent Service out. Epyx has just sent me Sub Battle, which can simulate any U.S. Navy or German U-Boats during any year from 1939 through 1945. Then there is Gato, one of the earliest sub hunt games, a classic on many - newly ported to the ST. Now the race to the next generation is on. Microprose has been moving toward it for some time now, with F-15 Strike Eagle, for example. The next generation of gameware for the ST will be geared toward simulating modern warfare technology, nuclear submarines, advanced fighting aircraft and helicopters. There is a book out that you must read, Hunt for the Red October. This is a finely crafted tale by Tom Clancy, that weaves an intricate web of international struggles between the US and Soviet Union while one man and his submarine, the Red October, attempt to defect to the US. This book is so highly detailed and technically accurate, that the author was said to have been debriefed by the White House. This best seller was the FIRST work of Tom Clancy, the insurance salesman. Well, his next book is out now (hard cover), Red Storm Rising. It will be out in paper back form this August. It is another epic tale that will have you rivited to its pages so much that you may not turn on your computer for weeks .... nahhhh, but a while maybe. Microprose had a large poster of the Red Storm Rising book cover at its CES booth. Sid Meyer is working closely with Tom Clancy and the principal technical consultant for the book, Larry Bond, to make a computerized simulation of the entire book! Only in the game, you will get to move the pieces of the puzzle, control the outcome. Microprose isn't the only one getting into the "nuclear age" of simulations either. Trust me, there are many more goodies coming in the next year that will obscolete all these old stuffy World War II simulations. While submarines give you graphics and strategy, all the karate games give your wrist the workout that can cause tendons to ache. Epyx now has World Karate Championship out for the XE and ST systems. Game play is actually a little better in terms of joystick response on the XE, but graphics, sound, facial expressions, and details upon details are phenominal in the ST version of this program. Ninja Mission from Mastertronic is a very interesting rendition in this genre'. Not only do you punch, kick, and jump, but you also weild a sword, and throw knives and stars. You must fight your way through 15 rooms, recover 7 (red!?) jade idols, and escape with your skin. It isn't easy, if possible (I haven't made it past the 14th room yet) at all. The graphics are much less potent than that from Epyx, but game play is a bit faster overall (except for the horribly annoying 6-8 second delay every time you move from one room to another). Then there is Karate Kid II, based on the movie of the same name. In this game you can even attempt to catch flies with chopsticks! Me, I use a Rawlings! This is the one karate game I haven't play tested yet. With all the review work, staring at me across this cluttered desk, I don't have time to ramble on about more of the latest. One final point of interest however; Sam Tramiel told me (as well as Lee Pappas, D.F. Scott, and Art Leyenberger) that the "MEGA STs are on a boat right now, somewhere between here and Taiwan." Take it for what it's worth. (Last time a delivery was real late, we heard some baloney about a few boats getting tied up because of the military coup in the Phillipenes!?) Happy Hacking! Mat*Rat

Update: I've heard that Megas are now showing up in the and Canada, some with blitter, some without. Odd, but at least they're showing up. John Skruch of Atari was kind enough to send me a whole stack of game cartridges for an article I'm developing for ANALOG called "Cartridge Classics". Many of these games will be rereleased when the new XEGS comes out. From an evening of game play I've found that Donkey Kong Jr. is the ultimate arcader's challenge, and a VERY true reproduction of the arcade original. Tennis is a more sophisticated game than you might think (you need the docs on this). Against the computer, you will hardly ever win, but this is a GREAT two player game - and you won't get tennis elbow playing it! (only joystick wrist!) Jungle hunt is fascinating, much faster and more sophisticated than Pitfall. Other Atari cartridge classics of all time include Star Raiders, Pole Position, Moon Patrol, and Joust! When they hit the market again (at a list price of $20, probably $12-15 in stores or mail order), these are MUSTS for any good gamer's collection. Easy Draw from Migraph was a LOT of fun to review, once I overcame the "phobia" of learning a new user interface. It was very easy to learn, because it is so completely GEM oriented. I'll have a full review of it for the next issue of Electronic MAG.

Update: (Man am I busy this month!)C programming on the 8bit Atari, my first experiecne with Lightspeed C from Clearstar Technologies: I got my first successful compile of a C program on the 800XL today! Hooray. I tried to compile a simple printf("hello world n"); last night, and fell asleep waiting! The problem was not the compiler but the runtime library I was using. L, M, and S (Large Medium and Small) runtime libraries come with the system. I hooked in Large, which was apparently too big for the version of Sparta DOS I use (with the MIO, 3.2d). Today I switched to SRUNTIME.OBJ and got a good compile the first time. It took a little bit to get the link to work, getting all the files in all the right places. The compile and link each executed in just a couple of seconds. It turns off the screen during compile (shuts down ANTIC interrupts) for a 20% speed boost. I then had a TEST.COM, when executed printed HELLO WORLD on my 800XL's display, SUCCESS! The file was only 384 bytes long, not bad. Next, I hacked out the following program just off the top of my head: #include "D1:STDIO.H" main() int i; graphics(8+16); color(1); for (i=0; i<320; i+=2) plot(i,0);drawto(319-i,191); Anyone who has EVER programmed in Atari BASIC before knows what that program does! (I never once consulted the manual while writing this program.) It compiled and linked first time. This 381 byte long TEST.COM file is all machine code, not interpreted BASIC! And it works great! This looks like a SERIOUS C compiler for the 8bit

Ataris. I'm going to have FUN with it. So far Lightspeed C is everything it has promised to be. I highly recommend it. Many thanks to MADMODIFIER and MAURICEM for their contributions this month!

MADMODIFIER's Atari Status REPORT
NEWS FROM ATARI:

The Mega ST and the SX212 modem are at the last step before arriving. We have received pre-production samples. These are the first units off the line with all the same components, packaging, and production techniques as the real thing. We get a small number of these to test and make sure there are no last-minute glitches. When we give the go-ahead, the next step is real production. The Atari PC is looking likely for later this Summer. The XEP-80 (for the 8-bits) is waiting on one part which turned out to have an incredibly long lead time on orders -- once we have the part we'll turn these around ASAP. The SLM804 Laser Printer is waiting on one final component also, as well as the final version of the software drivers that support it. New software from Atari includes the first titles in the Arrakis Advantage series of middle-school-level educational programs. There will be 17 in total, of which 4 have hit the stores already and the rest are in various stages of finalization. Shortly after the SX212 modem hits, we will release an add-on package for 8-bit owners which is to contain an SIO cable and the program SX EXPRESS by Keith Ledbetter, as well as the new handler file. Of course, SX212 owners with the 8-bits can also use it through the 850 interface using existing terminal programs set up for Hayes-compatible modems. The blitter chip is working and is in the pre-production Mega ST's mentioned above. The AMY chip is still in development, and may still see the light of day -- some day. AMY is a stubborn beast. Speaking of stubborn, Microsoft Write is also still in development. Nearly finished now, too, although a few small bugs remain to be expunged. SHOW NEWS: Atari made history by becoming the first computer manufacturer to exhibit at NAMM, the National Association of Music Merchants show in Chicago. The ST was present throughout the show in virtually every booth where there were MIDI instruments. Atari sales people at the show were beseiged by music dealers eager to sign up as Atari dealers. By the time this 4-day event was over, there were literally hundreds of dealer applications waiting to be approved. Before NAMM, Atari had 50 music stores as dealers -- it looks like there will be 250 when the new dealers are selected. In other news from NAMM, Keyboard magazine announced the results of its latest reader survey. The Atari ST computer has rocketed into the #1 slot in the vital "Intent-to-buy" category ahead of perennial leader Macintosh! The word in Atari HQ is "Today MIDI -- tomorrow, Desktop Publishing!"

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Blake's Relevant Ramblings
GFA Vector

In case you haven't heard of it yet, GFA Vector is a new utility that allows you to create 3 dimensional vector graphics for use with GFA Basic. It contains a machine language module with all the routines for manipulating the vector objects, and an editor for the actual design of the shapes, along with a few other files that tie everything together in your final GFA Basic program.

The object editor has two modes for entering objects: by points/lines and graphically. By points/lines can be useful for simple objects such as cubes or pyramids, but more complex shapes will probably require that you use the graphic editor. The graphic editor shows you three views of the object that you are currently working with: front, top, and left. I found the graphic editor a little awkward to use at first, but after following the tutorial in the manual for a few minutes it became clear how the editor was working. From then on it was simple to get the results that I wanted. It is also possible to mix editing modes by creating an object with one editor and modify it with the other (ie. create an object by points, and edit it graphically), to remove and points lines that were accidentally placed, for example. Unfortunately there is no "undo" function for the graphic editor; you must go up to the "Points" or "Lines" menu and remove the last entry manually (Not to tough to do, but an "Undo" would have been nice!). The graphic editor is best used in high resolution, but medium resolution will suffice. The graphic editor will not run in low resolution, but shapes created with it, or by point entries, may be used in ANY resolution, low resolution included. Saving an object results in a 10K (roughly) data file that GFA Basic will load when your program is run. This data file may contain up to 32 objects, 1024 points, and 1024 lines.

The machine language subroutine supplied with GFA Vector adds the commands necessary to display/move the object. Commands are included to scale the object, rotate it, color it, etc. As is implied, the routines are in machine language and the movement is relatively fast and smooth. The initialization file (INITIAL.LST) for these routines must be merged into any GFA Basic program that will call the machine language subroutines. It is a short file, and won't add very much to the program length.

The manual that comes with GFA Vector explains the editor, program setup, and object manipulation commands (that are called from GFA Basic) well, but over 1/3 of the manual contains advertisements for other MichTron software packages. I would have rather them place a catalog of their software in the package, and devote ALL the manual's pages to a more detailed explanation of the object manipulation commands.

GFA Vector should not be thought of as a complete program, but rather an extension tool for GFA Basic. It will allow you to create 3 dimensional vector objects, and gives GFA Basic

the capability to smoothly animate them. If thats what you're looking for, GFA Vector might be what you need.
Blake Arnold

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ICD MIO
256K $199.95 1 MEG $349.95
MIO and SpartaDOS 2.3/3.2 are copyright ICD, Inc.
By Thomas Warren

It's tough owning a computer system, there's always someone bringing out something trying to tempt you to part with your hard earned cash. The new Multi- Input/Output Interface (MIO) from ICD is no exception. Just what can you get for $199.95? Unless you have been living under a rock for the past few months, and haven't read the articles in both Antic and Analog magazines praising the MIO, you'd know that it comes with 256K or 1 MEG of internal, refreshed, RAM, a parallel printer port, RS-232 port, video port, and a SASI/SCSI hard drive interface. What the magazines don't go into detail about is how you can use the MIO. Other than the obvious use of the hard drive interface, what good is the internal memory? The 6502 can't access more than 64K, so programs won't take advantage of it. And, 1 MEG! Can you imagine loading it everytime you want to use it? I have trouble loading my 256K upgraded ramdisk on my 130XE. But, the MIO isn't like a normal ramdisk. It's more like a "soft" hard drive. The memory is constantly refreshed from the external power supply, so whatever you put into it stays there unless you have a power failure. So, you can load up the MIO with your terminal software, utilities, word processors, spreadsheet, or whatever, and call it up instantly. Just think, no scrounging for your word processsor. Why, the 1 MEG version could do away with diskettes!
All this sounds utopian, right? Well, there is another side. The MIO can't be accessed by any DOS except SpartaDOS 3.2. Oh, you can still use 2.0, 2.5, SmartDos, and TOP DOS 1.5+, as long as you keep your 1050 as drive 1. But SpartaDOS 2.3 won't work at all. And, if you configure the MIO to boot off itself, you'll lose access to the others. However, most programs work with SpartaDOS 3.2, so no problem.
Now, another practical use. Being a sysop, I was interested in the possibility of running the system strictly off an MIO and a ramdisk. It can be done on the 256K version, although the 1 MEG would be the better choice. Right now, I have all my message bases, passwords, system help files, and some of the downloads in the MIO. Unless a black out occurs, they will stay there. Even a system lockup won't disturb them (I know, I've had several). For you sysops, or would be, the best program for the MIO is Keith Ledbetter's Express 1030/850 (I run the 850), since you can copy system individually. Remember to do a KEY OFF command before running your bbs.
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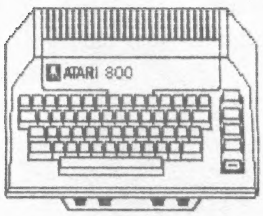

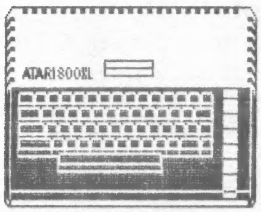

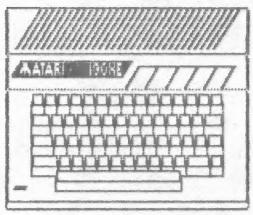

THE BACK PAGE

I hope everyone enjoyed this months issue of POKEY and remember, your comments are always welcome.

Editing of POKEY would not be possible without the fantastic help of Dave Arlington, Assistant Editor.

Special THANKS to my wife, Debbie, without whose love and support I could never devote this much time to POKEY.

Till next month,
Keith Schafer

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